



**MINISTRY OF TOURISM
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

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Speech delivered by the Deputy Minister of Tourism, Tokozile Xasa, at the occasion of the Opening Ceremony and Seminar - Malaysia

17 August 2015

- Programme Director,
- Honourable Guests,
- Ladies and gentlemen.

It is a great privilege for me to be with you this morning, and I bring you warm greetings from the people of South Africa, whom we are representing here in your beautiful country.

As developing nations, South Africa and Malaysia have a great deal in common. Both our countries stand at the frontier of a very exciting time in our respective histories, as we continue to go from strength to strength in our economic development.

We share a common goal of striving for the sustainable growth and prosperity of our people. There are many challenges to overcome – many of these would be unique to each specific country, but many more are shared amongst all developing nations.

In both our countries the tourism industry plays a significant role in the growth of the economy. We have so much to offer the rest of the world – from our rich natural beauty, to the diversity and uniqueness of our cultures and heritage.

Along with my delegation of tourism officials here today, we have worked in collaboration with Malaysia and a few other countries in the South East Asia region to make these Tourism Trade Roadshows a reality.

Bilateral relationships such as these are an important part of forging ties between our countries, finding new ways to work together in deepening the development of our people, and most importantly, an opportunity to share best practises with each other.

Of great interest to us in the South African tourism sector is the success that Malaysia has achieved with the Homestay Community Based programmes. At the Indian Ocean Rim Association meeting held in South Africa in May this year, we were glad to accept the invitation to visit Malaysia to learn more from you about these programmes, and to assess how relevant similar community based initiatives would be in the South African context.

The primary goal of the South African government is to engineer a more inclusive economy that will create job opportunities and transform the social landscape in our country. After 21 years of democracy, we are still faced with a number of challenges that obstruct citizens who were disadvantaged by the previous political regime.

Homestay programmes offer the inviting potential of increasing the inclusiveness of the tourism sector, extending it in very real terms to benefit previously disadvantaged groups, especially in under-developed rural areas.

As part of the South African delegation participating in our Malaysian Tourism Trade Roadshow, we have members from our Domestic Tourism Management team, headed up by Deputy Director General

Morongoe Ramphela. I can assure you that this team is eager to learn as much as possible from you about the Homestay Programme.

They are tasked with creating a conducive environment for domestic tourism to flourish. A large part of this task is based on finding new and innovative ways for ordinary South Africans to enter into the tourism sector.

This is achieved through skills development – especially amongst the youth and women; a focus on service standards and excellence; as well as facilitating the growth of tourism entrepreneurs and small businesses.

You will recognise that establishing a homestay programme in South Africa would tick many of these boxes.

We have much that we can learn from you, and we are equally excited to share our knowledge of our tourism industry with you.

Malaysia is the 4th largest new investor into the African continent. We are inspired by your GDP growth in 2014 of 5.6% and especially the 5.7% direct contribution that the tourism sector makes towards your GDP. You have shown that tourism really is alive with potential!

Honourable Minister of Tourism in Malaysia, I would like to extend a personal invitation to you to join us later today for the Tourism Trade Roadshow, where we hope to forge strong ties between ourselves and the Malaysian tourism trade.

I thank you for your willingness to partner with us, and wish everyone involved in the workshops and networking sessions many fruitful interactions and lessons learned.